

A FINE BALANCE



Photos by BRIAN BASHAM/The Citizen

Steve Bubul, of Minneapolis, Minn., unlocks his bike from a packed rack at Date & Thyme at the corner of Fleming and Margaret streets on Friday afternoon.

City relocates bike racks due to complaints

BY SCOTT UNGER

Key West Citizen

The city of Key West has seen bike racks appear and vanish over the last few months, but it's all in the name of accommodating residents, according to city officials.

Racks were placed on Fleming Street earlier this year as part of the Key West Planning Department's installation of approximately 170 bike "loops" (with each designed



A bicyclist unlocks his bike from a newly-installed bike rack along Margaret Street near the Fleming Street intersection.

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Racks

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for two bikes) around town, according to Bike and Pedestrian Coordinator Chris Hamilton.

The recent installations bring the number of bike racks in Old Town to between 400 and 480, according to estimates from Key West Public Information Officer Alyson Crean.

Complaints from residents on Fleming led to the racks being moved shortly after the installation, according to Assistant City Manager Greg Veliz.

"All of a sudden they get home and they see all these new bike racks and that's when we started getting all

the complaints," he said. "It's easy to say we're going to put bike racks wherever we need them, but that has an effect on the neighborhood."

Although Fleming has many commercial properties and guest houses, longtime residents deserve to have a say on new equipment on the street, Veliz said.

"When they were installed, we started getting complaints," he said. "I can't impede on people who have lived in that neighborhood for a number of years."

Comments to The Citizen indicated concern with an increased number of bikes being chained to trees and utility poles, which violates city code.

The Key West tree ordi-

nance bans the attachment of anything to trees with a diameter of 6 inches or more.

Bikes are sometimes tagged and removed from signs and poles under another ordinance that prohibits the obstruction of the public right-of-way, Crean said.

Both bike racks and moped parking spaces were moved to corners to allow for more car parking for businesses and open sidewalks for residents, Veliz said.

"We haven't really lost any bike racks, we just moved them to the corners," he said. "We're trying to keep the same amount of bike parking but not take up the car parking."

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Angela Niles



THE CITIZEN

KEY WEST

The Florida Keys Only Daily Newspaper, Est. 1876

Santa Fe blanks Key West in softball — Page 1B



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WEATHER



B.I. Barnes, fourth grade, The Seaside School

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FLORIDA

Prosecutors: No crime in inmate's death

Prosecutors in Florida have found no evidence of a crime in the death of a prison inmate left for nearly two hours in a hot shower, concluding that he died accidentally in part because of undiagnosed heart disease and suffered no burn injuries. The memo released Friday by the office of Miami-Dade State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle ends a lengthy criminal probe into the 2012 death of 50-year-old Darren Rainey, a mentally troubled man serving a two-year sentence on a cocaine charge. **Page 3A**

NATION

Trump, Merkel meet for first time

Though presenting a study in contrasts, President Donald Trump and German Chancellor Angela Merkel took a similar tack Friday in sidestepping differences after their first meeting at the White House. Trump asserted with a smile they had at least one thing in common: being whittled by the Obama administration. **Page 8A**

WORLD

Death toll in Peru flood climbs to 67

The number of people killed in Peru following intense rains and mudslides wreaking havoc around the Andean nation climbed to 67 Friday, with thousands more displaced from destroyed homes and others waiting on roof-

Deep well project moving ahead

BY TIMOTHY O'HARA
Key West Citizen

Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority has just completed its last major test of its deep injection well at the Cudjoe Regional Wastewater System plant and could have the well operational next month.

The FKAA has completed the casing for the well and, on Thursday, completed a pressure test, which involved pushing large quantities of

water down the well for a 24-hour period, FKAA spokeswoman Julie Cheon said.

The next step for the FKAA is to have the state Department of Environmental Protection grant the permit for the plant, FKAA Executive Director Kirk Zusich said.

Once permitted by the DEP, the FKAA will connect the pipes from the plant to the well, Zusich said.

"It's finally going well," Zusich said.

Drilling started last April, but has been twice delayed during the past eight months because of problems with the drill.

Work stopped for several weeks in January after a rod broke off some 2,000 feet below the surface. Drilling stopped for more than a week in July when the drill head broke.

The FKAA dug the deep well in response to a lawsuit from local homeowners who argued against using four shallow wells. They, along

with scientists, contended that the sewage could be pushed back up to the surface and contaminate the local nearshore waters if a deep well is not used.

The FKAA and the county eventually agreed to dig the deep well.

The deep well will push the nearly 1 million gallons of effluent treated to advanced wastewater treatment levels to roughly 2,000 feet below

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Residents request left turn lane on U.S. 1

BY TIMOTHY O'HARA
Key West Citizen

Sugarloaf Key residents want a left turn lane included in a \$4.6 million Florida Department of Transportation project on U.S. 1.

The left turn lane would be for drivers heading south and placed at the intersection of County Road 939 in front of Mangrove Mamas restaurant. More than a dozen residents spoke at a meeting Thursday night to lobby FDOT to include a turn lane in the resurfacing project.

They argued that the intersection leads into a small commercial complex, a residential neighborhood and the Sugarloaf Key KAD campground, which hosts large RVs, which sometimes trailer cars.

Two women who work at the offices at the corner of the intersection said they constantly hear the sound of cars slamming on their brakes.

Sugarloaf Key resident Chuck Licit said the highway can be "hypnotic" and he wants the FDOT to be proactive instead of reactive and put in a turn lane.

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Key West Gardens Hotel hosts annual Equality Florida gala